

**Draft - Updated on 2/1/2009**

Cayuga County Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plan

# Cayuga County Coordinated Public Transit- Human Services Transportation Plan

**UPDATED ON: FEBRUARY 1, 2009**

## **Introduction**

The Cayuga Transportation Committee (CTC) was formed to prepare a Coordinated Human Services-Public Transportation Plan to provide a summary of its previous public transit-human services transportation coordination efforts, to document current efforts, and to provide the outline for future efforts to improve coordination of transportation trips provided to the citizens of Cayuga County.

This Cayuga County Coordinated Human Services- Public Transportation Plan, hereafter referred to as the Plan, is specifically prepared to comply with the regulations of the Federal Transportation Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act- A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) mandate. The mandate is that projects for three specific Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs be derived from a “locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan”. The FTA programs the Plan applies to are:

- Section 5310 – Elderly Individuals and Persons with Disabilities
- Section 5316 – Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)
- Section 5317 – New Freedom

One of these FTA programs (Sections 5310) currently provides funding for vehicles to provide the transportation to customers of specific agencies. Future projects to replace those vehicles providing needed services were determined to be a critically important aspect of the Plan.

Cayuga County has been fortunate to have a well established demand response transportation system for seniors and people with disabilities called the Scat Van. This service was developed over 30 years ago as a result of local coordinating efforts and transportation needs assessments. The Plan identifies actions that may enhance the coordination effort among current transportation providers, if the actions can be funded.

While this plan is formulated to meet the mandates set forth by SAFETEA-Lu, it must remain flexible in its further development as new needs are identified and unanticipated coordination opportunities are identified or planned efforts refocused. It is possible, that coordination planning and operational partners will adjust with time.

A Transportation Committee was formed with 4 transportation providers, 2 of which also provide human services to specific populations. The members of this initial group include:

Centro of Cayuga

Scat Van

United Cerebral Palsy Association of Cayuga County

Seneca Cayuga ARC

The first meeting of the committee was March 25, 2008 and the agenda included the outline for this Plan, and recommendations for additional representation from the human services sector. Subsequent meetings have been held to address identification of unmet needs; obtaining funding from New Freedom grants to address mobility management; and discussion of implementation issues associated with the New Freedom grant obtained by Seneca Cayuga ARC as a lead agency for the Coordinating Plan.

### **Background Information on Federal Transit Programs and Recipients of Federal Program Funds**

The following is a brief description of the three Federal funding programs that are covered by the mandate which requires the plans such as the one presented here.

A. **Section 5310** makes funds available to meet the special transportation needs of elderly persons and persons with disabilities. These funds are apportioned to the states annually by a formula that is based on the number of elderly persons and persons with disabilities in each state. The program is administered in New York State by the New York Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). Capital assistance is provided on an 80 percent Federal, 20 percent local matching basis. Examples of capital expenses include, but are not limited to buses and vans. In New York State, private, non-profit agencies are eligible to receive program funding, and must demonstrate that they coordinate services for elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

The following Cayuga County organizations currently have vehicles funded by the Section 5310 program:

Seneca/Cayuga Arc  
Scat Van  
United Cerebral Palsy

B. **Section 5316 JARC** is a formula grant program to provide funding for local governmental authorities and agencies, and non-profit entities that offer job access and reverse commute services to transport welfare recipients and low income individuals to and from jobs, training, and child care, and to develop transportation services for residents of urban centers and rural and suburban areas to suburban employment opportunities.

Job Access grants may finance capital projects and operating costs of equipment, facilities, and associated, capital maintenance items related to providing access to jobs; promoting use of transit by workers with nontraditional work schedules; promoting use by appropriate agencies of transit vouchers for welfare recipients and eligible low income individuals; and promoting use of employer-provided transportation including the transit pass benefit program. For Reverse Commute grants, the following activities are eligible – operating costs, capital costs and other costs associated with reverse commute by bus, train, carpool, vans or other transit service. Eligible activities for JARC funding include late-night and weekend service, guaranteed ride home service, shuttle service; expanded fixed-route public transit routes; demand-responsive service; ridesharing and carpooling activities; transit related aspects of bicycling; local car loan programs that assist individuals in purchasing and maintaining vehicles for shared rides; marketing promotions for JARC activities; supporting the administration and expenses related to voucher programs; using Geographic Information System (GIS) tools and/or implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS); integrating automated regional public transit and human service transportation information, scheduling and dispatch functions; deploying vehicle position-monitoring systems; and establishing regional mobility managers or transportation brokerage activities. The Federal/local share is 80/20 for capital projects which include mobility operations, and 50/50 for operating projects.

In New York State, NYSDOT is responsible for the JARC program administration to rural areas such as Cayuga County. NYSDOT will use a competitive selection process to award grantees. While New York State procedures and guidance for this program are not complete at the time of the creation of this Plan, it is anticipated that non profit agencies and county government offices will be eligible to apply to NYSDOT for JARC funds. NYSDOT will select projects to be funded based on ones that meet needs identified in locally developed Coordinated Human Services-Public Transportation Plans such as this one.

**C. Section 5317 New Freedoms** is a new Federal transit formula grant program to encourage services and facility improvements to address the transportation needs of persons with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Funds can be used for associated capital and operating costs to provide the new services. Examples of projects and activities that might be funded under the program include, but are not limited to: purchasing vehicles and supporting accessible taxi, ride-sharing, and vanpooling programs; providing paratransit services beyond minimum requirements (3/4 mile to either side of a fixed route), including for routes that run seasonally; making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodal stations; supporting voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers; and supporting mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation. The Federal share for the net project capital cost of a project may be up to 80 percent, and not more than 50 percent of the net operating cost of a project. This is a new program and there have not been any previous projects funded through 5317 for Cayuga County.

## **Inventory of Services and Resources**

### **A. Public Transit: \***

Centro of Cayuga, Inc., a subsidiary of Central NY Regional Transportation Authority operates public transportation bus routes in the City of Auburn and operates commuter bus services that run between Auburn and Syracuse (Onondaga County), Auburn and Moravia and Auburn to Skaneateles (Onondaga County). Centro buses and most bus stops are accessible.

The City of Auburn bus routes, which there are 5, operate between 5:45am and 11:25pm, Monday through Friday and 8:00am to 8:00pm on Saturdays. There is no Sunday service.

The routes serve major employment centers, the Hospital and medical facilities, several shopping malls/plazas and the local community college. Fares begin at 60 cents for the City services and seniors and persons with disabilities may ride for half fare. Commuter route fares range from \$1.50 to \$3.00, with discounted passes and multiple ride tickets available for customer convenience.

In 2006, CNYRTA redesigned the City bus route system to better serve shopping and employment centers that had changed with time. These improvements have led to significant increases in ridership, with some quarters exceeding 14%. The City bus routes now operate on a pulse system with a major hub in the center of the downtown area. This hub center has also recently undergone an enhancement in customer conveniences.

Centro of Cayuga, Inc. also provides ADA complementary paratransit services for customers who are ADA eligible. The service is called Call-A-Bus. The service area is ¾ mile on either side of the City bus routes and the days/times of service are the same as the bus routes. Eligibility is determined by an application process and rides can be requested between 14 days and up to 4:00pm the day before travel day.

Centro of Cayuga has a contract with the Transportation Project of Cayuga County, (Scat Van), to provide rides for Call-A-Bus customers during the daytime hours. Any Call-A-Bus rides that cannot be served by Scat Van, are assigned to Centro operators and vehicles. The Call-A-Bus fare is \$1.20.

## **B. Human Service Agency Transportation Providers**

### **1. Seneca/Cayuga ARC \***

Seneca/Cayuga ARC, hereafter called ARC, provides options for treatment, employment, education, and recreation for over 1200 individuals with disabilities and their families. ARC operates Camp Columbus, a summer day camp, the Karl Warner Clinic, an Alzheimer's day center and sheltered and supportive work centers. ARC also provides day habilitation and residential habilitation programs. Resources for its diverse programming comes from Medicaid, OMRDD, NYS Office of Mental Health, VESID, NYS Department of Health, the United Way and local funding sources. Seneca Cayuga ARC is the largest non-profit transportation provider in Cayuga and Seneca Counties.

ARC has a substantial need for transportation for its clients and operates a fleet of 98 vehicles comprised of 28 wheelchair accessible buses, 10 wheelchair accessible vans and 46 minivans or cars. The transportation service is provided from 6:30 am to 7:30 pm, Monday through Friday. The drivers are paid staff and urgent service can be provided 24/7. Aides are provided on all buses that require additional services due to the rider's disabilities. The ARC also operates transportation services for its residents and Day Services consumers that includes rides to medical appointments, shopping, recreation and employment or volunteer work.

ARC provides 425 one way trips per work day on average and logs 500,000 service miles in the course of a year. This program is part of a fuel consortium operated by Cayuga County Highway Department for the vehicles that operate in Cayuga County. Maintenance is contracted out to local garages.

### **2. Transportation Project of Cayuga County, Inc. \***

Ride services for seniors and people with disabilities are provided by Scat Van, a volunteer driver program with accessible vans. 2 paid staff manage the program which provides door to door service with advance notice of 5 days. The service area includes all of Cayuga County and fares are not charged, but donations are accepted. Scat Van has local offices in Auburn, Union Springs, Cato and Moravia and provide rides from 7:00am to 4:00pm, Monday through Friday. There are 98 volunteer drivers at this time, who commit themselves to working a "full" day whenever they volunteer. These drivers are properly screened and go through a formal training program before operating one of the vans. Volunteer escorts also accompany the drivers

enabling a more efficient loading, unloading and escort service to and from doorways. Scat Van carries approximately 40 to 50 passengers a day, many of whom may take more than a round trip during the travel day. These passengers often "bundle" their errands making 3, 4 or more trip legs in one day. Besides the demand response service, Scat Van also provides service to Centro's Call-A-Bus customers and offers local nursing homes an opportunity to "lease" the vehicles on the weekends to take residents out for recreational purposes.

Scat Van vehicles are predominantly procured through the 5310 process and there are 8 accessible vans in use. Scat Van also has a mini-van for ambulatory customers and a wheelchair van that is owned outright. This program is part of a fuel and maintenance consortium operated by Cayuga County Highway Department.

Operational funding for Scat Van comes from the Cayuga County Office for the Aging, United Way, Centro, local fundraising efforts and community based grants.

### **3. E. John Gavras Center, United Cerebral Palsy Association of Cayuga County \***

The Gavras Center, hereafter referred to as the Center, is a leading advocate and provider of services to children, adults and families with special needs. Services include Pre-K, therapy, Day Habilitation, Residential Habilitation and individual case management, partially funded by the NYS Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disability. The Center also operates transportation services for its clients that includes rides to medical appointments, shopping, recreation and employment or volunteer work. Transportation services are provided by paid drivers or paid therapy staff, 7:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, and 9:00am to 7:00pm on Saturdays. 120 passenger trips per day is typical and the department can cover approximately 350,000 service miles per year.

The Center has a mixed fleet of 25 vehicles including wheelchair vans, 12 passenger vans and cars. The cars are leased. The Center relies on the 5310 program for some vehicles and is scheduled to receive 2 in May, 2008 as a result of the 2006 5310 program. The Center's transportation service is also part of the fuel and maintenance consortium operated by the Cayuga County Highway Department.

### **4. Cayuga County Veterans Service Agency**

Besides its customary support roles for veterans, the agency provides transportation to the Syracuse VA Medical Center, Monday through Thursday.

### **5. Cayuga Seneca Community Action Agency**

This diverse community agency, hereafter referred to as CSCAA, provides Headstart, Weatherization services, Family programs, transitional housing, employment services and several youth programs. The Headstart program provides transportation for the children through contracts with Birnie Bus, Inc. and First Transit, Inc., operating from September through June. This service provides as many as 250 children with rides each school day.

CSCAA also has a Wheels to Work program, funded by the NYS Community Development Block Grant that has provided 10 to 15 cars per year to low income employees. Car repairs, insurance and car seats are also available through this program.

**6. AIDS Community Resources**

AIDS Community Resources provides supportive services to people infected or affected by HIV/AIDS and provides educational and prevention information to the community. The agency provides transportation assistance by offering Centro transit passes, coordinating transportation with the Medicaid transportation office where appropriate and providing rides through a contracted taxi company.

**7. Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) \***

RSVP is a referring and support agency for older people who are active volunteers or wish to volunteer in support of the community. RSVP operates one van within the City of Auburn for the purpose of transporting volunteers to their work sites and back.

**8. Medicaid Transportation – Cayuga County Health and Human Services Department \***

Statistically, Medicaid Transportation is the largest “demand-response” transportation service in the county. Monthly, the service will provide more than 1000 wheelchair accessible vehicle trips, 300 to 400 volunteer driver/sedan trips, 600 taxi trips and 50 to 60 stretcher van trips. The Transportation office also distributes Centro transit passes, confirms eligibility and brokers the trips to one of several contracted vendors or a small volunteer driver force. The service area is Cayuga County with some service to neighboring counties as needed. All trips are restricted to Medicaid recipients and require prior approval.

**9. Unity House – Mental Health Services \***

Unity House offers supportive and residential services for people with mental health problems and those with developmental disabilities. Unity is divided into a mental health division, developmental disabilities division and the employment division. Each has a small fleet of vehicles, for example, mental health has 2 vans with 1 full time driver serving the needs of 45 to 50 clients. Trips may be for employment, treatment or recreational purposes and vans are available 7 days a week.

**C. Other Transportation Providers**

There are a number of private, for profit transportation providers serving Cayuga County. The following list represents those identified in the 2008 Community Directory, Living in Cayuga County, published by The Citizen on September 23, 2007.

**Ambulances**

- Auburn, operated by TLC
- Rural Metro Medical Services
- Skaneateles Volunteer Emergency Service
- TLC Emergency Medical Services

**Medical Transportation**

- Able Medical, Inc
- AAAA Transport
- Helping Hands Transportation
- Cayuga Medical Van Service (part of Scat Van)

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**Taxi Service**

Deluxe Taxi

**Bus Services**

Birnie Bus, Inc.

First Transit, Inc.

Onondaga Coach Corp.

**Documentation of Needs:**

Cayuga County is a small, rural county in central New York with a population of 81,102 at the time the Census was updated in 2005. Thirty-five percent of this population resides within the center of the county which includes the City of Auburn. The remaining sixty-five percent of the population resides throughout the County in twenty-three towns, nine villages and the surrounding area. Nearly sixty-five miles long, with a land area of 694 square miles, the county's geography can be a transportation challenge for service providers and for families trying to access services who live outside the central area of Auburn.

The provision of transportation services can be difficult to provide as many families travel out of county for medical care as well as shopping. The northern population travels to Oswego County; the southern population to Tompkins or Cortland Counties; and even the central area of the county travels to Onondaga County.

It is anticipated that there will be a growing demand for transportation services as our population continues to age. Cayuga County's total population is expected to decrease by 4.3% overall between 2000 and 2015, however the 60-and-over population is expected to increase by 27%. The 85-and-over population is growing the fastest – it is expected to increase by 48% by 2015. Over eighteen percent of the population (15, 044) is above 60 years of age, a percentage that is above the state average.

The 2006 American Community Survey from the Census Bureau reports that there are 12,673 persons with a disability, age 5-and-over. Of these 12, 673 persons, 23% are below the poverty level (compared with 7.4% of those persons age 5-and-over who have no disability).

Through a series of meetings and conversations between individual agencies participating in the Cayuga County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, the participants have identified overlapping services and unmet needs: A lack of system wide information collection system that can make information about available transportation services available to users; an easy to use and accessible system for allowing users to reserve rides and entering into ride-sharing arrangements; additional capacity within the non-profit transportation network to allow it to feed riders more easily into the public transit system; making information public on how to use these systems that is communicated directly to those most in need of them.

**Target Population for the Coordinating Plan:**



This proposal directly affects the disabled, elderly and economically disadvantaged in Cayuga County. However Cayuga County is an area of over 1500 square miles, mostly rural, with one major city, Auburn. Cayuga County overall has a population of 81,963. The greater Auburn area represented by zip code 13021 has a population of approximately 41,700 and would be the primary focus of the activities of this proposal. Several smaller population centers, Weedsport, Port Byron, Cato, and Moravia would also be affected but on a much smaller scale. Based on projected census figures for 2000 (2006 figures are not available for this geographic area), the disabled population of the greater Auburn area (Zip code 13021) was 7,572 or 20.6% of the population (Cayuga Co 19.6%). The population over 65 was 7,228 or 17.3% (Cayuga Co. 14.4%). The number of individuals below the poverty line as of the 2000 census was 4,998 (12.6%). The staff of Seneca Cayuga ARC working in the greater Auburn area and earning a salary of less than 133% of the poverty level is 325.

Those employed to serve the elderly and disabled are paid on the lower end of the wage scale. Seneca Cayuga ARC, the largest non profit employer of this sector in the area, pays its direct service staff on average \$9 per hour which would be 133% of the poverty level for a family of two and less than 90% of the poverty level for a family of four (Based on 2006 levels). The staffs of the agencies participating are frequently the most in need of transportation assistance, especially with fuel prices approaching \$5 per gallon.

### **Needs/Goals:**

Although the above agencies and public services provide essential transportation services for a large number of disabled, seniors and to some extent, low income riders, no coordinated service exists to integrate these services and make available to the public an easy to use, accessible process for using it's capacity. We have identified the following unmet Mobility Management needs:

1. The promotion, enhancement, and facilitation of access to transportation services, including the integration and coordination of ride sharing and van-pooling services for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and low-income individuals;
  - a. Staffing of a part time administrator to manage all aspects of the integration and coordination of transportation services between participating agencies.
  - b. Support for short term management activities to plan and implement coordinated services; Promotion through an integrated marketing program with all participating human service agencies, and city and county human service units.
2. Web-based interface to allow potential riders to see available rides/routes and to self-register for these rides. This system would integrate ride-sharing and van-pooling systems along with existing routes of agency and public transit buses. Paratransit functions would allow for on the fly routing of buses and vans for more flexible "demand-response" solutions.
3. GPS locators on all vehicles with a GPS routing system to allow the dispatcher to locate available vehicles for real time pick-up information and to allow more efficient routing of vehicles in the fleet.

**Proposed Plan to Achieve These Goals**

Seneca Cayuga ARC had proposed acting as the lead agency in obtaining 5317 funding to begin meeting the needs addressed above. This proposal was accepted by the planning group and Seneca Cayuga ARC has been successful in obtaining funding to meet the goals and objectives described below.

**Specific Goals and Objectives of the New Freedom Project:**

Goal: Establish a web-based platform that will allow the integration of ride information and allow for the provision of ride-sharing and van-pooling through this platform to all participants in the Cayuga County Coordinated Transportation Planning Group.

1. Providing a web based accessible ride information and van reservations system for individuals with disabilities and individuals earning less than 150% of the poverty level working in the agencies providing services to the community for rides to work and home again.
  - a. Objective 1: Increase rides provided to the two target groups (disabled individuals and low income staff) on existing routes by 10% per year
  - b. Objective 2: Increase percent of staff of participating agencies commuting by ride sharing or public transit systems by 10% in first year.
  - c. Objective 3: Increase use of public transit with connections facilitated by web based reservation system.

Goal: Establish an administrative staff person to manage the coordinated / integrated provision of ride-sharing and van-pooling and to train participating agency staff in the use of this system.

1. Hire a part-time (20 hours / week) manager to administer the integrated system.
  - a. This individual will train other agency's staff in the use of the system
  - b. Coordinate implementation with the Cayuga County Coordinated Transportation Planning group
  - c. Manage all necessary reporting required by the grant.
  - d. Provide all necessary accounting of grant funding.
  - e. Hire the additional staff as required.
  - f. Report to the Director of Transportation of the Seneca Cayuga ARC.

Goal: Provide "demand-response" functionality to the coordination system by adding GPS routing and navigation on all vehicles.

1. Providing a GPS location and routing system on buses and vans participating in the mobility management system to allow for more efficient routing of vans and buses to meet rider needs.
  - a. Objective 1: Improve efficiency of routes using computerized routing for all participating agencies by 10% savings in time and fuel.

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- b. Objective 2: Improve “demand/response” timing by knowing exact location of all vans and buses when requests are made, allowing for real time response.

Goal: Increase participation of agencies and their clients within the Coordinate Plan by publicizing the availability of the coordinated service and its advantages to transportation consumers.

- 2. Publicity for such a system to inform the public and those needing rides to work of the available options for self-serve ride reservations
  - a. Objective 1 Allow for publicity of routes and access to rides to the disabled community in the greater Auburn area and to staffs of participating agencies needing ride sharing assistance.

It is known that the programs currently making use of 5310 funding to procure vans are in need of replacing their older fleet vehicles. Specifically, Scat Van, the E. John Gavras Center and Seneca Cayuga ARC programs would like to remain recipients of the 5310 funding in the near future.

### **Previous and Current Partnership Efforts:**

The Transportation Project for Cayuga County, the umbrella organization for Scat Van, has an exceptional model of partnership for consideration by NYSDOT and FTA. The vans are procured through the 5310 program and, as is encouraged by the legislation, Scat Van makes the vehicles available to residential care homes (nursing homes) for group trips in the evening and on weekends. Scat Van screens and trains their staff who become official Scat Van drivers prior to loaning a vehicle. A suggested donation is requested to assist with costs of fuel and maintenance. As has been mentioned previously, Scat Van also provides rides through a contract with Centro of Cayuga for customers who are eligible for ADA complementary paratransit service.

Other Current partnerships are:

(1) Centro, Scat Van, Gavras Center and ARC – purpose is to begin formulating a community transportation plan assisted by the funding from the New Freedom grant obtained by Seneca Cayuga ARC.

(2) Human Services Coalition of Cayuga County – purpose “is to bring together human service providers, public and private organizations, and individuals to address the needs of the community through interagency coordination, information sharing and collaboration.” (from the 2008 Community Directory). The Human Services Coalition has several task groups including Adult & Community, Elderly & Disabled, and Children & Family. One concept worth exploring is adding a subcommittee or task group on community transportation.

(3) Cayuga County Employment and Training Department – provides job training, counseling, OTJ training, workforce referrals, occupational training, job placements, job search and summer

youth employment programs. Serves as the county's one stop employment center with participation of over 20 different community agencies.

**Coordination Issues:**

It is likely that the same barriers to coordination such as liability and risk, blending populations and cost sharing will exist in Cayuga County as elsewhere in the nation. It is noted however, that on a limited basis, the Transportation Project has overcome some issues.

**Implementation Plan**

**Phase One: (February 2009 to June 2009)**

1. Acquisition and implementation of web-based software allowing self-serve ride sharing, van pooling and reservations on available seats of existing fixed route buses or vans.
  - a. The initial introduction of this system would be to existing riders and consumers of existing ARC services who could be notified through existing service providers.
  - b. Hiring of a dispatcher and phone operator to assist in implementing this system for those without internet connectivity.
  - c. Initiation of the "guaranteed ride home" option. This provides for an up to \$25 reimbursement for cab fare or alternative ride when a rider is unable to ride home through the available rides in the system due to un-foreseeable circumstances. (See attached documentation on the expected costs of this program)
2. Initial publicity of the system to the staff of participating agencies earning below 150% of the poverty level.
  - a. Until the additional capacity from two additional buses has been added, the capacity of the existing fleet would not be able to accept more than these additional groups.
  - b. Until we have the opportunity of testing the market within this group, we do not know what the demand will be. As the price of gas continues to rise, we expect there to be a growing demand for these available seats.
3. Installation of GPS systems on all participating vans and buses that will be available for demand – response service and installation of computerized routing system to increase the efficiency of fixed routes and demand created routes of participating transportation systems.

**Phase Two: (July 2009 to January 2010)**

1. Acquisition of two additional buses and hiring of two additional drivers.
  - a. These two buses offer capacity for public use after initiation of broader publicity.
2. Initiate city wide publicity through participating agencies and Centro, public transit.
3. Review and coordinate with participating agencies within the Planning Group to make revisions as needed to obtain program goals.

### **Innovative Approaches in this Plan:**

This plan proposes a partnership involvement with Environment and Ecology Inc. and their development program with the New York State Energy Resources Development Agency (NYSERDA). This program will use this innovative software solution to introduce the coordination and integration sought in our Needs Statement without the costly IT infrastructure usually required.

### **Coordination and Program Outreach**

Seneca Cayuga ARC is taking the position of Lead Agency to provide the organization and administration of this project. The project will make available to the other participating agencies the ability to make ride-sharing arrangements with all other users of the system. The project will also allow other participating agencies to use the web-based van-pooling system to utilize the unused capacity of the ARC bus system to pick up and drop off any participant disabled, senior and low income customers on these routes.

This project is sponsored by the Cayuga County Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan and its participating agencies. A working group comprised of the initial participating agencies will meet on a regular basis to review the project's effectiveness in meeting its goals and to design further expansion of the project.

Initial efforts to market the project will be based on the participating agencies target groups, not the general public so as to keep from overwhelming the initial system. This marketing will be done in the way each agency best communicates with its clientele. The Seneca Cayuga ARC will disseminate information to its staff via its agency web-site and inter-agency mail. Information will be communicated to its supported employment community through the job coaches that work with each individual.

### **Program Effectiveness**

This project seeks to match the existing capabilities of the participating agencies to the technology and fleet capacity that currently exists with the lead agency and its staff. In this way the participants of the Coordinated Plan will be able to take initial steps toward coordination and improved services for job access with the least disruption to existing programs and operations. The identified needs of better coordination and improved use of technology to overcome the increasing cost of commuting to work will be addressed in the initial phase of this project.

Within the initial two years of this project we expect to meet the following performance milestones:

- 1) Increase rides provided to the two target groups (low income staff and disabled) on existing routes by 10% in the first year and 20% after acquisition and addition of two additional buses.

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- 2) Increase percent of staff of participating agencies commuting by ride sharing or public transit systems by 10% in first year and 20% in second year.
- 3) Increase use of public transit with connections facilitated by web based reservation system measured by drop offs at public transit stops.
- 4) Improve efficiency of routes using computerized routing for all participating agencies by 10% savings in time and fuel.

The participating agencies, through the Cayuga County Coordinated Transportation Plan Group, meets regularly for the purpose of evaluating and promoting increased cooperation among transportation providers in the County. This group will monitor the progress of the plan in meeting its goals and make recommendations for improvements.

Funds have been budgeted to implement plan improvements as suggested by the Group within the first year. The Administrator of the program meets with the Group to provide information and to take additional direction as needed.